

assert, that he stammered to a great degree. But of this last defect they supposed he was cured.

He lived at the time when *Craesus* governed *Lydia*. He had been twice sold as a slave, before he was purchased by *Xanthus* the *Samian*, who was his third master, and from which period of his bondage we shall begin our history.

Many of the things related of him are indeed mean and trifling, but they are suited to his circumstance of life, and discover his amazing sagacity and penetration.

The first of these that I think worthy your observation is, that his master being obliged to send several burdens by his slaves to *Ephesus*, permitted *Æsop*, on account of his bodily infirmity, to take his choice. He chose the panier of bread that was to support them on their journey, for which (as it was the heaviest of all the burdens) he was laughed at by his companions, who despised him for his folly, one of them indeed out of compassion, offered to help him to carry it, but *Æsop* thank'd him, and said they should all carry it by and by, which accordingly they did, for after two or three meals were made, they saw *Æsop*
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fanter, along with little more than an empty basket; and from that time they began to have a different opinion of his abilities.

Some time after this, their master had a present made him of some fine figs, which the slaves having stolen and eat, agreed to lay the theft upon poor *Æsop*. The master extremely incensed, ordered him to be severely punished, but *Æsop* getting a large bowl of warm water, drank it before him, and it returned again without any appearance of figs. He then desired his fellow-slaves might be put to the same trial, which being done, the secret was discovered, the figs came up in plenty, and the punishment intended for *Æsop* was inflicted on them.

Æsop's master sold all his slaves at *Ephesus*, except a *Musician*, an *Orator*, and *Æsop*, whom he carried with him to *Samos*, and exposed them in the public market for sale. *Xanthus*, an eminent philosopher, who came with a number of his pupils to see the slaves, was greatly taken with the two first, and asked them about their professions, and what they could do. The one said he could do *any thing*, the other that he could do *every thing*; he then
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